The intersubjective interaction in psychoanalysis: Enlightenment from Martin Buber's philosophy of dialogue

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Abstract: Buber's distinction between the "I-It" and "I-Thou" relationships can be helpful for understanding the intersubjective interaction in the field of psychoanalysis. In psychoanalysis, the "I-Thou" relationship is mainly manifested as follows: (1) Interactive partners can devote themselves to the current dialogue and complete the matching at the level of nonverbal and verbal communications. (2) Interactive partners can make a good negotiation and repair their relationship after an interruption and rupture. The "I-It" relationship usually means one-way manipulation of the other to satisfy their own needs, such as the safety and narcissistic needs. This manipulation can be done through verbal, emotional, and physical actions. In addition, Heidegger's description of the transition from "readiness-to-hand" (Zuhandenheit) to "presence-at-hand" (Vorhandenheit) can be used to understand the change from the success to the failure of interpersonal manipulation, which can provide a turning point for the replacement of the client's maladjusted interaction patterns. Future psychoanalytic research can be conducted on this basis.

Key words: psychoanalysis, intersubjective interaction, "I-It" relationship, "I-Thou" relationship, nonverbal communication

1. Introduction

For where unreserve has ruled, even wordlessly, between men, the word of dialogue has happened sacramentally.

—Buber (2004, p.5)

Since the beginning of the late 1970s, many schools in the field of psychoanalysis have undergone an intersubjective turn, and its influence in North America is particularly huge (Bohleber, 2013; Kirshner, 2017; Zhang, et al., 2022a). As a result, terms such as "intersubjectivity," "two-person interaction," and "interpersonal relationship" have become familiar topics for many analysts. During this transformation, the intersubjective theory in the field of philosophy plays an important role. For example, inspired by Husserl and Heidegger, Stolorow and his colleges try to introduce more phenomenological implications into psychoanalysis. They criticized Freud's "Cartesian isolated mind", and believed that only in an inseparable intersubjective system can we understand various psychological phenomena. Accordingly, psychoanalysis needs to abandon many structural concepts (e.g., id, ego and superego) and replace them with phenomenological descriptions of subjective experience (Atwood & Stolorow, 2014). According to Aron and Benjamin, the realization of the mutual recognition mentioned by Hegel is the sign of having the ability to intersubjectivity, that is, to understand that the other is another relatively independent subject with

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his own unique internal world and perspective (Benjamin, 2018). In many French analyst (e.g., Green and Roussillon), the acquisition of subjectivity is inseparable from the encounter with the other and is shaped by the desire of the other (Zhang et al., 2022a). Starting from the "dialogical stance" of Buber, Binswanger and Levinas, Frie (2010) emphasizes that the other is not a generalized abstract, but a unique, living and concrete person. Only by recognizing otherness can we hold a compassionate attitude and become sensitive to the other's needs, possibilities and limitations in treatment process.

In the process of intersubjective turn, Buber's philosophy of dialogue has influenced some psychoanalytic researchers (Benjamin, 2018; Bohleber, 2010; Bradfield, 2013). However, compared with its influence in humanistic psychology, this interdisciplinary application to psychoanalysis is far from enough. The reasons may be as follows: (1) Buber criticized several tendencies of Freud, namely, "too reductionist and mechanistic, too inclined to reify the unconscious, and too dismissive of religious experience" (Orange, 2010, p. 15). This makes some of Freud's successors hold an attitude of exclusion; (2) Buber's views have a certain religious color and sometimes appear mysterious. For instance, he discussed the relationship between man and God (Buber, 1970). Nevertheless, the views of some analyst (e.g., Winnicott and BCPSG) show a high degree of agreement with Buber although his work is not explicitly mentioned (Orange, 2010). Therefore, it is necessary to enrich the understanding of the intersubjective interaction in psychoanalysis from the two relationship modes distinguished by Buber.

2. Two basic relationships: "I-It" and "I-Thou"

Buber believes that the "I-It" and the "I-Thou" relationships are the most basic relationships in human interaction, and everyone resides in one of them. The "I-It" relationship is a unilateral relationship of cognition, control, utilization, and possession. In this relationship, I am at the center, and the others are objects of cognition or tools to be manipulated. In extreme cases, this relationship can lead to a degradation of the status of the other and the alienation of the self. In contrast, the "I-Thou" relationship is an equal dialogical relationship between subjects. In this relationship, I and the other are both subjects, and both parties take turns playing the speaker and listener (Buber, 1970). In Kant's (2012) words, man is an end rather than a means. To enter this type of relationship, both parties must respond to each other with a sincere attitude and achieve a type of intersubjective encounter (Friedman, 2002; Orange, 2010).

On this basis, Buber criticized two views of transcendence (or two pictures of the world): The first view is "self-deflation theory," i.e., putting a finite self into the infinite world to complete self-transcendence and gain eternity. In this manner, "I" am overwhelmed by the world. The second view is the "self-sage theory" involving the inclusion of the vast world and other beings into the "me," thereby realizing my sublimation and immortality. In this case, the world is swallowed by "I." In Buber's view, these two methods are people's resistance to materiality, but they are not enough to achieve true transcendence. Only in a mutually open relationship can "I" and "Thou" achieve sublimation and transcendence (Buber, 1970).

It can be considered that the above two views of transcendence present a "tug of war" between "I" and "world": In the former extreme case, the center of gravity is completely pulled to the the "world" side; in the latter extreme situation, the center of gravity is completely pulled to the "I" side. By applying this picture to the matrix of interpersonal interaction, the following picture can be drawn: I and the other are in a dialectical tension, and the center of gravity moves

between the two with the tug of war. Among them, the "I-Thou" relationship is a nonconfrontational balance between the two relationships, while the "I-It" relationship is a situation in which one party dominates the confrontation. Under this framework, many researchers' (e.g., Jean-Paul Sartre, Martin Heidegger, Emmanuel Levinas and Hans-Georg Gadamer) discussion of interpersonal relationships provides a new understanding.

Let us first look at Sartre. Sartre continued Hegel's master-slave struggle model (Chen, 2017). For Sartre, there is only one unequal and asymmetrical relationship between me and the other: Either I objectifies the other, or the other objectifies me. This can be seen in Sartre's analysis of shame: "When I am immersed in peeping at the other through the keyhole, I am a pure consciousness of things" (Sartre, 2003, p. 283), and I have nonpositional consciousness. However, when I heard footsteps and realized that someone was watching me, I became a positional consciousness object in the eyes of the other. In the gaze of the other, "I am seated as this inkwell is on the table...I am leaning over the keyhole as this tree is bent by the wind" (Sartre, 2003, p. 286). I am ashamed, and this type of shame "is shame of self; it is the recognition of the fact that I am indeed that object which the other is looking at and judging" (Sartre, 2003, p. 285). "On the other hand, I can also look at the other in turn. In this way, I try my best to resist being objectified, escape and liberate from the domination of the other, and make an object out of him" (Sartre, 2003, p. 385). In short, in the interpersonal interaction that Sartre understands, individuals have only two choices: look at the other or be looked at by the other; "hell is other people" and "engendering the death of the other" are the keynotes of interpersonal relationships.

It can be said that the interpersonal relationship in Sartre's theory is a typical "I-It" relationship model. In fact, in addition to this "Medusa's gaze"[1], there are also various types of gazes, such as the gaze of parents' charity and love, gaze of lovers with affection, gaze of friends who encourage and comfort, and gaze of strangers who look suspiciously (Chen, 2017). The gaze can contain hostility, aggressiveness, dismissiveness, faultfinding, and disappointment, or it can be mixed with impassionedness, joy, admiration, affection, and self-assuming. Among these gazes, there is not only Sartre's mode of focusing on confrontation between the other and I, but also the mode of equal dialogue that is lacking in his theory. The latter is the essence of the "I-Thou" relationship.

Next, let us look at Heidegger. Heidegger (1962) believes that individuals live together with the other in the world. While interacting with the other, the individual may "arrange" the affairs that the other has to complete, providing great help to the other. However, because of this help, the other forgets his original responsibilities, loses himself, and becomes dependent or controlled. This will "leap in and dominate him" (einspringen). Another possibility is that the individual allows the other to worry about the things they are about to face, and allows the other to exist for themselves. This seemingly "indifferent" approach is precisely the real concern for the other, so that the other is worried about the other. To gain freedom, this will "leap forth and liberate him" (vorspringen). In daily life, people are often in between these two extremes, such as opposing each other, being unrelated, missing each other, and not caring for each other. It can be seen that the "leaping in and domination" is a manipulation of the other, and it is the "I-It" relationship; "leaping forth and liberation" is an equal relationship, which can be regarded as the "I-Thou" relationship. The many forms between the two are the result of the "tug war" between the "I-It"

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[1] Medusa is a snake haired Banshee in ancient Greek mythology with a beautiful appearance. However, when someone looks at her eyes, the person will be attracted by her magic, lose his/her soul, and become a stone statue.

relationship and the "I-Thou" relationship.

Again, let us show Levinas' discussion. Levinas (1979) pointed out that when I meet with the other face to face and try to construct, object, and grasp the other with the "Medusa's eyes" in Sartre's theory, three different types of relationships will appear: First, submission. In this mode of relationship, my power completely "rules" the other. He is exposed to all my power, succumbing to all my tricks and all my crimes. Second, real resistance. At this time, the others resist me with all their power, freedom, and resources. Third, ethical resistance. This is also the type of relationship that Levinas is most concerned about. In this situation, other people show their faces, going beyond all scales to oppose me with their own, and with their naked eyes, direct and absolutely candid gaze against me (Zhu, 2016). In other words, what I see is not a physical mask, not an object that can be controlled and materialized, but a living face. It is not an entity that refuses to be contained, grasped, and merged, but the original expression. "It brings us to a notion of meaning prior to my Sinngebung and thus independent of my initiative and my power" (Levinas, 1979, p. 51). Levinas even went further and believes that in my interactions with the other, I must be entangled by the other, respond to the needs of the other, be responsible for the other, and eventually become hostages of the other.

By analyzing these three relationships, we find that the first type of relationship is the "I-It" relationship, and the second type of relationship is the fierce resistance of the other to dominate the "I-It" relationship. The third type of relationship reveals that the vivid face of the other presents me with a "person" that is alive and cannot be materialized, and calls me to a "I-Thou" relationship of equal dialogue. The hostage of the other is suspected of moving towards inequality, and may become another version of the "I-It" relationship. In this relationship, "I" becomes the object of use, and "I" becomes "It."

Finally, Gadamer's views on the intersubjective interaction can also be included in the discussion. Gadamer bluntly said that Buber's theory has an important influence on him. From Gadamer's perspective, my relationship with the other can be divided into three types: In the first type of relationship, I see the other as a tool to be known and used, trying to "discover typical behavior in one's fellowmen and can make predictions about the other on the basis of experience" (Gadamer, 2004, p. 352) to gain knowledge of human nature. This is actually a scientific cognitive attitude. In the second type of relationship, I regard the other person as one person, but the two interactive partners claim "to know the other's claim from his point of view and even to understand the other better than the other understands him" (Gadamer, 2004, p. 353). In other words, I and the other stick to our own opinions and ask each other to accept our position. This type of relationship is essentially a reflective relationship, so there is always a "gulf" and a distance between the two parties. In the third type of relationship, I admit that the others are equal subjects as me and open to the other with a completely open attitude. "I" listens to what "you" says, responds to "your" opinions and requests, and even accepts something against me. In contrast, if one of the parties firmly believes that they are superior to the other and talks in a condescending manner, they will fall into a type of paranoia, and the atmosphere of dialogue will be destroyed. In such a situation, free dialogue cannot be produced, and agreement and consensus cannot be achieved. The result can only be that the opinions or will of one of the parties is expanded, and the ideas of the other party are ignored or oppressed. They have to yield to the other party. It can be seen that the first two relationships are actually what Buber calls the "I-It" relationship, and the third relationship is equivalent to Buber's "I-Thou" relationship. The

difference is that Gadamer has enriched the "I-It" relationship and added a situation of confrontation.

In summary, the "I-It" and the "I-Thou" relationships can be regarded as two basic modes of interpersonal interaction. Under the "tear" of these two relationships, a more colorful interactive mode can evolve. In the theory of Fromm (1976), this corresponds to the having mode and being mode.[2] In the words of Lewis Aron (1996), it is "struggling" between complementarity and mutuality. Application of this idea to the field of psychoanalysis might provide some new inspirations.

3. "I-Thou" relationship in psychoanalysis

In the field of psychoanalysis, parent–child relationship and therapist–client relationship are the most frequently discussed relationships. The two are often placed together for comparison, and even once "equivalent", i.e., the therapist–client interaction is a "complete repetition" of parent–child interaction (Mitchell, 1988). Although many contemporary analysts increasingly pay more attention to the "novelty" of current experience (Delgado et al., 2015), the similarities between these two relationships are still a key part of psychoanalysis. In these two-person interactions, the "I-Thou" relationship means treating the other person as a relatively independent subject, making the otherness fully manifest. This involves fully understanding the differences between the other and I, and accepting that the others have different thoughts, feelings, abilities, and needs. In Frie's view, this means a "dialogical stance"--when facing a unique, living and concrete person, we need to maintain a compassionate attitude and become sensitive to the other's needs, possibilities and limitations (Frie, 2010). In the words of Hegel and Benjamin, it is mutual recognition (Benjamin, 2018). From this perspective, even if there is an asymmetry in the capabilities and responsibilities of the interactive parties in the parent–child and therapist–client relationships (i.e., the mother and analyst usually assume the role of "helper") (Delgado et al., 2015), an "I-Thou" relationship can be established. From a more specific form of expression, this "I-Thou" relationship interaction mainly means two aspects: First, the two sides fully participate in the current interaction, respond wholeheartedly, and strive to build an equal dialogue; second, when a conflict arises, the two parties can negotiate on the disagreement, and even work hard to repair the relationship after the breakdown.

3.1 The present wholehearted response

According to Buber's view, children in early age cannot use language yet, let alone say "I", but the "I-Thou" relationship already exists (Buber, 1970). This has been supported by many research

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[2] The having mode and being mode proposed by Fromm are similar to the "I-it" relationship and "I-Thou" relationship proposed by Buber. In Fromm's view, the having mode emphasizes on the object of possession (e.g., things, people and spirit). In this mode, the individual is embodied by the object he owns. The being mode focuses on the existence of life itself, aiming at the realization of human potential (love and reason) (Guo, 2022). Take conversation as an example: In the having mode of conversation, individuals aim to defend their own positions, do not want to change their own opinions, or only expect the other party to change. In the being mode of conversation, individuals believe that they are living people and can overcome self-centeredness, so that conversation is not an exchange of goods (e.g., information, knowledge and status) but a dialogue. Thus, It doesn't matter who is right or wrong (Fromm, 1976). However, Fromm's analysis seemed to focus on individuals, emphasizing the "real existence" of human beings, and did not discuss the real intersubjective interaction, although he emphasized interpersonal relationships. Starting from him, there will be an incomplete two-person psychology. By contrast, Buber emphasized the intersubjective encounter in which there will generate some wonderful experiences beyond words, and this could not be separated from the face-to-face opening of both interactive partners. This kind of "in between" area and experience is the focus of two-person psychology.

results. First, this is reflected in the matching of nonverbal communication between mother and child. Specifically, when a baby makes a certain emotional expression, such as facial expressions, sounds, or actions, the mother receives and responds adequately, and is then seen, heard, or felt by the baby (Seligman & Harrison, 2012). Stern's research shows that there are three behavioral characteristics that can be matched without imitating, namely intensity, timing, and shape, which can be further subdivided into absolute intensity, intensity contour, temporal beat, rhythm, duration, and shape. Among the three matching methods, intensity matching is the most common, timing matching is the second, and shape matching is the least. In most cases, more than one matching element is present. The matching ratios from high to low are the intensity contour (81%), duration (69%), absolute intensity (61%), shape (47%), temporal beat (13%), and rhythm (11%). In these matches, what is important is not the explicit behavior, but the corresponding emotional state, i.e., affecting attunement. Therefore, matching is different from imitation: the former focuses more on the communication and sharing of the internal state, while the latter focuses more on the external form (Stern, 1985).

After Stern, Beebe and Lachmann (2002, 2014) further enriched the study of mother–infant interaction. They used video analysis and found that in the interaction between 4–12-month-old secure attachment dyads, both sides showed a relatively stable rhythm and predictability in all dimensions: (1) In the visual attention dimension, if the baby looks at the mother, the mother will also look at the baby; if the baby looks away, the mother will usually also look away. If the situation is reversed, the result is the same. (2) In the facial and vocal affect dimension, if the baby's mood changes, the mother's mood also changes. The opposite is also true. (3) In the facial–visual engagement dimension, no matter whether the baby's gaze and emotions are positive or negative, the mother is also in the same state. However, when the mother's gaze and emotions show a positive or negative state, the baby will not change his state accordingly. This may mean that in this dimension, the mother is more of a partner to cooperate with the baby. (4) In the touch dimension, if the baby's tone is more positive and the frequency of touch is higher, then the mother has more tendency to touch or touch emotionally. The reverse is also true, i.e., if the mother's touch is gentler, the baby's emotions will be more positive. (5) In the spatial/head orientation dimension, the mother's spatial orientation unilaterally affects the baby's head orientation. Specifically, when the mother changes from a straight sitting position to approaching forward, the baby's head changes from face to face to an arch; when the mother changes to a straight sitting position, the baby changes back to a face-to-face head position. The reverse is not true. This is probably because the mother does not need to twist the head to complete the "fit." In general, the interaction between babies and their mother appears to be very smooth on the whole, like flowing clouds and flowing water, which is a manifestation of full devotion and response (Beebe & Lachmann, 2014).

It needs to be pointed out that in the mother's response to the baby, similarities and differences in experience are indispensable. Togashi (2012) sees it as maintaining a dialectical tension between sameness and difference. The mentalization theory of Fonagy and his colleges describes this process as follows: For example, when a baby expresses anxious emotions, if the mother wants to successfully regulate it, the feedback to the baby must be a more complex or "mixed" emotions of "markedness," so these emotions can correspond to the original anxiety (e.g., fear) and also be incompatible with it (e.g., mockery). As a result, the mother conveyed a message of being able to empathize (fear means "I understand you") and cope (mockery means "nothing to

worry about"). This type of "return," which is similar to the infant's emotional experience (i.e., the fear corresponding to anxiety) but is different (i.e., the "incompatible" mockery with anxiety), provides the infant with an ability to characterize anxiety and further self-regulation (Allen et al., 2008; Fonagy, 2001). In the words of Heidegger (1962) or Gadamer (2004), the similarity in the returned experience is related to the preunderstanding, and this part of the content makes the understanding of the infant possible; the difference means that the new experience is different from the preunderstanding, and then forms a new understanding. This is also reflected in an important feature of matching, i.e., matching is mostly across sensory channels. For example, the intensity and duration of the voice expressed by the baby matches the mother's physical movements; the movement of the baby's arms matches the mother's voice (Stern, 1985). In short, the mother's response is not a simple "copy" or "imitation," but contains a personal imprint to convey to the baby "I understand you" and "I respond to you" (Zhang et al., 2022b).

In addition to nonverbal communication, verbal communication between subjects can also realize the interaction of "I-Thou" relationship. As babies gradually learn to use language, they have a tool to describe their experiences and ideas. Therefore, the way of responding in the "I-Thou" relationship model becomes richer. For example, the child happily shares his/her findings with her mother, "Mom, look at this!" Then, the mother smiles and looks at the child, sincerely proud of the latter, and praises "It's amazing" (Hagman, 2020). In this way, an "I-Thou" relationship interaction can occur. Similarly, in the treatment process, it is particularly important for therapist-client to achieve turn-taking: when the client speaks, the therapist listens carefully and shows that he is concentrating on the visual dimension; when the client remained briefly silent, then the therapist commented. Vice versa. Both parties showed predictability in the duration of vocalizations, pauses, and switching pauses (Beebe & Lachmann, 2020). Furthermore, when analysts get rid of their "professional role" and respond to clients with a sincere attitude, "moments of meeting" described by the Boston Change Process Study Group (BCPSG, 2010) and "heightened affective moments" described by Beebe and Lachmann (2002) may occur. As a result, the two parties entered into the dialogue of the "I-Thou" relationship.

Notably, both Buber (1970, 2004) and BCPSG (2010) believe that nonverbal communication is often more important than language in realizing the encounter. "Although language is increasingly incorporated into these encounters with development, the structure of the encounter itself may never be represented in words. It is simply enacted and grasped implicitly in its enacted form" (Lyons-Ruth, 2000, p. 94). This is probably because a key to encounter is the spontaneity and immediacy of emotional response, rather than faster and more direct interaction at the nonverbal level. Therefore, the encounter has already taken place before the "effect" of language communication, and the description of the encounter is often the result of reflection afterwards (BCPSG, 2010). However, we must point out that as a wholehearted response, language and emotion cannot be completely separated. In fact, in the communication after language acquisition, the equal dialogue in the "I-Thou" relationship is inseparable from language. It is based on language exchanges where different individuals with very different backgrounds can describe a lot of things that the other party is not familiar with (or even completely ignorant), so that both partners can overcome previous differences, create a coshared background, and form an intersubjective field as described by many researchers (e.g., Atwood & Stolorow, 2014; BCPSG, 2010) and the "fusion of horizons"[3] by Gadamer (2004). As BCPSG (2010) pointed out, the

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[3] In classical hermeneutics, if we want to understand the text correctly, we must abandon the current horizon (or

moment of encounter is critical in the change of treatment, but the role of the relatively "quiet moment" also cannot be ignored. In addition, when the language communication between the two parties is very smooth, the language will show a type of "transparency" as if it does not exist (Bineham, 1995). At this time, the language in the "readiness-to-hand" does not become an obstacle between the two parties. In contrast, it promotes the mutual opening of the two parties, sharing and interweaving the experience. In the "emotional dwelling" described by Stolorow, this role of language is well reflected: using language to accurately express the understanding of the traumatic experience of the other party, to accompany and participate in the other party's emotional pain, and then to realize the transformation of traumatic experience (Stolorow, 2013, 2014).

3.2 Negotiation and repair

In the actual interaction between subjects, the "perfect response" cannot always exist. In fact, situations such as misattunements, disagreements, impasses, and broken relationships often occur. At this time, the negotiation between the two parties and the restoration of the relationship are very important. In the mother–infant interaction, a typical period of frequent disagreement exists, what Mahler described as the "separation–individualization" stage. In this stage, the baby swings back and forth between exploring the outside world and returning to the mother. On one hand, the baby is eager to "conquer" the world independently and gain a sense of ability and confidence. On the other hand, the baby is limited by his immaturity, so the baby needs his/her mother as a secure base for help. However, the mother may be concerned about the baby's safety, or cannot bear the loneliness of the baby leaving her, and therefore restrict his/her movement, so as to form a shadowing pattern on the baby. Another situation is that the mother cannot provide the care and support the baby needs in a timely manner, thus creating a darting-away pattern (Mahler et al., 2000). Subsequent attachment studies have reported similar observations (Powell et al., 2014).

However, the interactive mode of secure attachment can usually be reattuned after a misattunement and repaired in time after the relationship breaks. Successful repairs can often consolidate the connection between the two parties and further strengthen the confidence of both parties to work together: They believe that although the interaction may have problems and the connection may be destroyed, they will eventually release their suspicions and see "the sun shines again after rain" (Wallin, 2007). This is also supported by research results: Infants with more experience in rupture and repair will use more adaptive strategies in interpersonal interactions, and they are more likely to form secure attachments (Beebe & Lachmann, 2002).

Similarly, in psychoanalytic therapy, there are many areas that need to be negotiated. The scope of the negotiation is very wide, including the nature of the therapist–client relationship, style of narrative, resistance of the client, and interpretation of analyst, and it can even involve the psychological distance, emotional atmosphere, length of silence, and the cost of treatment (Aron, 1996). At the micro level, this kind of negotiation can be reflected as interactive contingency--to what extent the therapist and the client adapt to each other's voice and the duration of silence, and more or less closely follow, which is specifically manifested in the duration of vocalizations,

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prejudice) and stay in the horizon of the text (and the author); otherwise, it will cause distortion and cannot achieve "objectivity." In Gadamer's view, such "prejudice" or "vorurteile" is indispensable. While reading the text, there are differences in horizons between the reader and text (and author). To understand the text, the author must start from the current horizon and form what Heidegger called "preunderstanding." With the progress of reading, the author's horizon expands constantly and finally permeates with the horizon of the text, forming a new horizon and new understanding. In other words, understanding is always the product of a specific historical situation.

pauses, and switching pauses. Research shows that switching pause interactive contingency is significantly related to warmth, empathy and interpersonal attraction in adult (Beebe & Lachmann, 2020). In the case of disagreements, the interaction between the analyst and client may break. Subsequently, the analytic session entered an impasse and stalled. This is called intersubjective disjunction by Stolorow and his colleges, i.e., the content understood by the analyst deviates from the true thoughts of the client, and this interaction presents a crisis (Atwood & Stolorow, 2014; Stolorow, 1994). At this time, the repair work that analysts lead by example is critical. In Orange's view, this is regarded as a fallibilism position, i.e., the therapist holds the belief: "we can always be wrong, that there is always more to learn, that our understandings are never more than partial and tentative" (Orange, 2011, p. 173). In this way, the therapist can maintain an openness and curiosity and focus on exploring the subjective world of the client (Burg, 2018). From Benjamin's perspective, when a relationship breaks during treatment, it is very important for the analyst to frankly admit his mistakes and shortcomings and express apologies and regrets to the client. This means first of all, the analyst did not intentionally cause harm to the client, nor he avoided his responsibility. Second, analysts can forgive themselves after making mistakes and discuss them, instead of suffering from shame and guilt. Finally, the analyst can endure the client's scrutiny and even criticism, and the clients can participate in the interaction as an interpreter and interlocutor (Benjamin, 2018). Kohut also pointed out that failure of empathy is inevitable. No matter how "cautious" the analyst is, it is impossible to fully understand the needs of the client, especially in the face of the needs for deprivation of narcissists. When this happens, expressing apologies to the narcissist in person is an effective and feasible way (or even the only way) (McWilliams, 2011). Similarly, the expression of BCPSG (2010) from "a failed now moment" to "a moment of meeting" also reflects the importance of repair. Wallin's (2007) treatment of Randall and Eliot can also be considered as similar examples.

4. "I-It" relationship in psychoanalysis

In the "I-It" relationship mode, the more extreme situation is that one party unilaterally squeezes and utilizes the other to satisfy its various needs. When the manipulation is very smooth, it may be difficult for the former to perceive the various mental states of the other. This situation is just like what Heidegger(1962) called the "readiness-to-hand"[4], i.e., the smoother the manipulation, the less the appearance of other person as a subject. This situation is particularly evident in narcissists. Many narcissists prefer to immerse themselves in their own fantasies, seeing the other as tools to satisfy their own needs. In a state of extreme narcissism, other people are just an extension of me rather than a subject independent of me, and they have no emotions, thoughts, and behaviors independent of me. For example, when I need praise and praise from the other, the other must surround me like stars holding the moon and provide me with the corresponding applause (i.e., what Kohut called mirroring need). When I need to merge with the idealized other, the other must become a perfect idol and unconditionally establish an "unbreakable" relationship with me (i.e., what Kohut called idealizing need). When I need to rebuild my superiority because of frustration, the other must act as my "punching bag," being humiliated and degraded by me, without the

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[4] In Heidegger's (1962) view, when we use an appliance very smoothly, we often do not pay special attention to it, which is the "readiness-to-hand" (Zuhandenheit). When the appliance is not easy to use and has problems, we begin to carefully observe and look at it, and regard it as the "object," which is the "presence-at-hand" (Vorhandenheit). There are three stages in the transition from "readiness-to-hand" to "presence-at-hand." Dreyfus(1991) rearranged them into conspicuousness, obstinacy, and obtrusiveness.

slightest complaint. When I do not need the other, they must disappear from my field of vision, and there can be no actions that hinder me. In this process, the other party must fully understand what I mean and act according to my wishes even without saying a word by me (i.e., what Kohut called alter ego or twinship need) (Diamond et al., 2011; Hotchkiss, 2003; Kohut, 1984). In contrast, the various emotions, ideas, and behaviors of the other outside of the narcissist's "needs" and "expectations" are often ignored. In other words, the "differences" of the other different from "I" are erased. Similarly, for borderline personality disorder clients, it is a very common phenomenon to manipulate the other through idealization and devaluation (Clarkin et al., 2006). In addition, maladaptive individuals such as psychopaths (sociopaths), maniacs, hysterical clients, obsessive-compulsive disorder clients all exhibit this type of behavior, to manipulate the other to gain a sense of security or a good sense of self-worth (McWilliams, 2011).

In the implementation of this "I-it" relationship mode, projective identification, as a covert way of manipulation, plays an important role. It is mainly realized through unconscious communication[5] (Chen & Chen, 2015; Long, 2015; Nielsen, 2019): For example, narcissists project emotions (e.g., shame caused by "I'm not perfect") and desires (e.g., the desire to merge with perfect lovers) that are not accepted by themselves onto lovers, and skillfully influence lovers at the unconscious level. When the partner identifies with these emotions and desires, she will unconsciously cooperate (e.g., "I should be ashamed of my own imperfection," and then ask myself according to the standard of a perfect lover), and be manipulated inadvertently (McWilliams, 2011). This situation is also common in the therapist-client interaction: Some narcissistic clients will idealize analysts and think that analysts are "saviors" who can magically solve all problems, so they are very "cooperative" with analysts and strive to be good patients (Haber, 2018). Under such pressure, analysts may experience a feeling of "powerlessness." Once analysts fail to help the client as expected (e.g., failing to accurately empathy and respond incorrectly), they may be troubled by feelings of shame and guilt. For example, in the case of Daniel, the analyst felt that he was trapped in a dilemma where he had to listen to the client endlessly and avoid direct conflict (Jaenicke, 2017); In the case of Marjolaine, when the analyst felt that it was difficult to resonate with the client and the response became dull, he fell into the continuous struggle with shame and guilt (Richard, 2012).

In fact, the interactive mode of the "I-It" relationship spreads across parent–child relationship, peer relationship, and intimate relationship. Individuals use this to satisfy various needs such as connection, security, and narcissism, while alleviating and overcoming loneliness, fear, and worthlessness feelings and other negative mental states. However, in relatively "healthy" individual interactions, this manipulation is not as extreme as maladaptive clients. The implementation of manipulation can be direct or obscure with rich and varied means. In summary, the ways to achieve this type of manipulation can be divided into three categories: language, emotion, and physical action. Take the parent–child relationship as an example: when a child's test scores are very bad and detracts from the mother's narcissistic needs, she can manipulate the child through language. For example, she can criticize/humiliate/devalue the latter, accusing "you are too disappointing!"; or she can use verbal threats, "if you fail again, mother will not love you!" If

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[5] After Klein, Bion expanded projective identification from one-person's inner fantasy to two-person's interaction, including pathological and normal projective identification. In the intersubjective approach, projective identification (as well as transference-countertransference and enactment) is regarded as part of a broader interpersonal interaction, which is a two-way construction process, mainly realized through unconscious communication (Chen & Chen., 2015; Long, 2015). Therefore, the process of covert manipulation through projective identification is included in the emotional path described later.

the child wants to avoid this difficult situation, he or she may be forced to yield to the mother's request, strive to improve grades, and become a "good boy" or "good girl" in the mother's eyes. In addition, mothers can also perform this manipulation by expressing negative emotions, such as silently looking at their children's grades, but showing angry or indifferent. In the way of physical action, she can also impose physical punishment (e.g., hitting and pinching) to make the latter yield to her requirements. Just as interpersonal communication can contain multiple forms, manipulation in the "I-It" relationship mode can also be performed in multiple ways at the same time, such as angry and brutal physical abuse of children, accompanied by verbal humiliation. Table 1 shows more specific examples.

In successful manipulation, the manipulator or dominator can satisfy his needs to a certain extent. In this way, this type of manipulation may be retained in the internal loop as a strategy of interpersonal interaction. When the individual has similar needs, this type of interaction will be implemented in the external loop, and even generalized to interaction with other people (BCPSG, 2010; Siefert & Porcerelli, 2015). In this case, the emotions, thoughts, and actions of the other as subjects are usually ignored, often resulting in the degradation of the subject's status. For example, the humiliated or degraded individual feels loss of self-worth and is plagued by negative emotions (e.g., shame) (Hotchkiss, 2003; McWilliams, 2011).

However, manipulation is not always successful. In fact, manipulation failures are also very common. If it fails, the individual may quickly switch to other methods and continue manipulation. For example, when a mother uses language to abuse a child and finds that the effect is not good, she can use physical violence to make the latter obey herself. This is similar to what Heidegger (1969) called the "conspicuousness" stage. If the manipulation fails and the process of control cannot be quickly restored, the relationship between the two parties will enter a transient state of "collapse," and the subjectivity of the other and the limitation of the manipulator will appear to a certain extent. For example, the individual may find that his ability to manipulate is not always effective, and there is an "unfamiliar" aspect in the other at the same time. This is similar to the "obstinacy" stage described by Heidegger (1969). If the manipulation completely collapses and cannot be carried out at all, the individual may stop this activity helplessly, and even perceive the entire pattern of "I-manipulate-Other," deeply understanding the subjectivity of the other and his own limitations to change the way of interaction. At this time, it is possible to enter a new relationship model. For example, Klein describes the infant's active repair after the destruction of the object (Mitchell & Black, 1995), and Winnicott describes the mother who survived from the infant's attack (Winnicott, 2005). This is similar to what Heidegger (1969) called the "obtrusiveness" stage to a certain extent (see Dreyfus, 1991).

It is not difficult to speculate that in these "I-It" interactions, the communication patterns of the two parties will show more mismatches. Take the mother–infant interaction as an example: Mothers of ambivalent infants usually have different degrees of imbalance in the dimensions of facial–visual engagement, touch, and spatial/head orientation; mothers of disorganized infants are more serious, not only disharmonious in the above three dimensions, but also imbalanced in the visual attention dimension and facial and vocal affect dimension (Beebe et al., 2014). This is in sharp contrast to the interaction of secure attachment. Similarly, in the process of the rupture of therapeutic alliance, more interruptive and noninterruptive simultaneous speech will occur (Beebe & Lachmann, 2020).

5. Several supplementary notes

For the interaction between subjects in the field of psychoanalysis, several points need to be added: First, as Buber said, the "I-It" relationship is indispensable, especially for infants who must rely on caregivers at an early stage. It is very urgent to "use" the other to satisfy their own needs. Researchers such as Winnicott describe this as the "relentless use" of objects by infants (Benjamin, 2018). If this need is not satisfied in the most basic way, it will cause various defects in individual development, just like plants lacking sunshine and water (Mitchell, 1988). Therefore, in the early parent–child relationship, the "I-It" relationship often occupies the main role, i.e., the baby "requests" support from the caregiver.

Second, both the "I-It" and the "I-Thou" relationships can exist in the internal and external loops. However, because the inner world contains more "mine-ness," it is to a large extent "my world," and thus is more likely to become a one-way manipulation, i.e., the "I-It" relationship. In fact, when the individual is unable to obtain satisfactory interaction in the external world, it is an "effective" strategy to achieve control over the other in the fantasy of the internal loop to achieve a temporary buffer. However, if an individual is separated from the external reality for a long time and is immersed in the closed system reported by Novick and Novick (2013), it will not be able to establish good interaction with the other in reality. At this point, analysts such as Mitchell (2000) and Aron (1996) criticized object relations theorists, considered the latter only conceiving a "subject–object" relationship in the internal world is inappropriate. In fact, when the "internal object" has both good and bad sides, it shows that the other in this internal world is not completely "fantasy" or "constructed" by me, which means that the otherness has been already shown to a certain degree.

Third, the materials accumulated in psychoanalytic clinical practice show that maladjusted individuals often use the "I-It" relationship mode in interpersonal interaction, which mainly results in the following situations: (1) Manipulating others, to make others become my appendage; (2) Being manipulated by others, to make me a vassal of others; (3) The relatedness is cut off, leading to loneliness or pseudoindependence. As a result, the subjectivities of both partners are alienated, denied, or even eliminated to varying degrees. By contrast, well adapted individuals mainly use the "I-Thou" relationship mode in interpersonal interaction, which can maintain a dialectical tension of relatedness and individualization (Zhang, 2022). As a consequence, the subjectivities of both sides are highlighted (Benjamin, 2018). From this perspective, one of the goals of psychoanalytic therapy can be set to guide clients from the "I-It" relationship mode to the "I-Thou" relationship mode, so that they can exist as "subjects" in different interpersonal interactions and become more adaptable.

Fourth, whether it is in the internal or external circuit, the "I-Thou" relationship cannot be established once and for all. When the interaction is broken and the otherness is dispelled, the "I-It" relationship mode will be in the "arena" of interpersonal interaction. In other words, the two sides may be caught in a battle for "power" (Benjamin, 2018).

Table 1. Examples of the expression of the "I-It" relationship

	Parent–child Relationship	Peer Relationship	Intimate Relationship
Language	·Criticism/humiliation/devaluation: "You are too disappointing," "You're nothing"; ·Refusing: "Don't bother me," "stay away from me"; ·Order: "I won't have you leave me," "You must depend on me"; ·Intimidation/threat: "If you cry any more, mother will abandon you," "If you fail again, I won't love you"; ·Rationalization: "I worked my ass off because of you. How could you not listen";	·Criticism/humiliation/devaluation: "You're an idiot," "You don't deserve to be my friend"; ·Refusing: "There's no way I can help," "I don't want to talk to you"; ·Order: "I don't allow you to make friends with Jaime"; ·Intimidation/threat: "I'll break off my friendship with you," "I won't help you anymore"; ·Rationalization: "I paid all for you, can't you meet my wish?";	·Criticism/humiliation/devaluation: "You have no merit at all," "No one will like you"; ·Refusing: "Get out of here and leave me alone," "I'm not gonna hug you"; ·Order: "You belong to me alone," "I don't allow you to have other heterosexual friends"; ·Intimidation/threat: "If you keep doing this, we'll break up/divorce," "If you leave me, I will kill myself"; ·Rationalization: "Obey me, if you love me";
Emotion	·Anger: To compel obedience, comfort, or distancing oneself from another; ·Apathy: To force the other person to distance himself or herself and represses his or her needs;	Same as parent–child relationship	Same as parent–child relationship
Action	·Physical aggression: Different forms of hitting, pinching, and sexual assault, with or without tools; ·Restrict of freedom: To hold on to the other person and imprison them in a space;	Same as parent–child relationship	Same as parent–child relationship

6. Conclusion

Buber's philosophy of dialogue provides a helpful perspective for understanding the interaction between subjects in psychoanalysis. On this basis, this article interprets the "I-It" relationship and the "I-Thou" relationship in psychoanalysis. Among them, the "I-Thou" relationship mainly means treating the other party as another subject relatively independent of oneself. This is mainly manifested as follows: (1) Both parties can devote themselves to the current dialogue and complete the matching at the level of nonverbal and verbal communications. (2) After an interrupted and broken relationship, the two parties conduct good negotiation and repair their relationship. The "I-It" relationship means more one-way manipulation of the others to satisfy their own needs. For example, narcissists use the other to satisfy their own narcissistic needs. From the specific implementation process, it can be completed through language, emotion, and physical actions. In addition, the change from successful manipulation to manipulation failure can be inspired by the three stages (conspicuousness, obstinacy, and obtrusiveness) described by Heidegger from the "readiness-to-hand" to the "presence-at-hand." For psychoanalysis, this is a very valuable theme, to guide clients from the "I-It" relationship mode to the "I-Thou" relationship mode, so as to provide a turning point for the replacement of the client's maladjusted interaction patterns. Future research can be conducted on this basis.

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